DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 389 408 PS 023 703

AUTHOR Schmitz, Stephen; Pono, M. Odette
TITLE We Are the Neocolonialists of Micronesia.
PUB DATE Aug 95
NOTE 20p.; Revised version of a paper presented at the Annual Pacific Education Conference (Koror, Palau, August 1-4, 1995).
PUB TYPE Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Viewpoints (Opinion/Position Papers, Essays, etc.) (120)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Change Strategies; Colonialism; *Cultural Awareness; *Culture Conflict; Developing Nations; *Educational Development; Educational Improvement; Educational Strategies; Foreign Countries; Heritage Education; *North American Culture; *Politics of Education
IDENTIFIERS *Americanization; Micronesia

ABSTRACT

Examining the fragmentation and Americanization that pervades education in Micronesia, this paper explores the causes of the fragmentation, which represent a local attempt to modernize education, and the local belief in the superiority of American culture. The consequences of a fragmented world view have been confusion between educational aims and means, and goals and methods. The confusion about the concepts of education, culture, modernization, colonialism, autonomy and reform that exists in Micronesia is exacerbated by eight problems, including the following: (1) educators' confusion of modernization with Americanization when it comes to curricular and methodological reform; (2) reform has taken on an "us vs them" mentality that is intellectually debilitating and counterproductive; and (3) a lack of self-confidence among many of Micronesia's school systems has been combined with failure among administrators to trust the professionalism of teaching faculty. An important first step to resolving this confusion is establishing a philosophy of education that is truly Micronesian. Four suggestions are recommended for developing a distinctly Micronesian pedagogy: (1) give teachers decision-making authority; (2) develop local materials; (3) establish a robust research agenda; and (4) reflect, decide, and help teachers become education's leaders. (AP)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION
CENTER (ERIC)
X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

ED 389 408

We are the Neocolonialists of Micronesia

A revision of a paper presented at the Pacific Education Conference
Koror, Palau August 1-4, 1995

Stephen Schmitz and M. Odette Pono

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS
MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Stephen
Schmitz
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES
INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

College of Education, University of Guam
UOG Station, Mangilao, Gaum 96923
phone (671) 735-2411 fax (671) 789-1231

PS 023703

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

We are the Neocolonialists of Micronesia

Abstract

The authors use the childhood experienced of co-author Pono to illuminate the fragmentation and Americanization that pervades education in Micronesia. The source of much of this fragmentation is local attempts to modernize education and a local belief in the superiority of American culture.

The neocolonialism of Micronesian education is purveyed by local Micronesian educators who use the methods and materials of mainland schools instead of developing a pedagogy that highlights the connectedness of world cultures and Micronesia's place in world society. The authors present 4 suggestions for developing a distinctly Micronesian pedagogy.

We are the Neocolonialists of Micronesia

Stephen Schmitz and M. Odette Pono

Throughout the Micronesian region, recent economic modernization efforts and the professionalization of local schools have left Micronesian educators in a quandary. Because of historical antecedents in the region, modernization and professionalization have become virtually synonymous with Americanization. As educators seek to modernize schools, classroom teachers increasingly have come under pressure to make their pedagogy a virtual mirror of standard mainland methodology. At the same time, however, Micronesian educators are charged with the preservation and teaching of local indigenous languages, social practices, and cultural traditions. How to accomplish both goals is a perplexing puzzle for Micronesian educators.

In this manuscript, co-author Odette Pono uses her early childhood experiences as a Filipina immigrant to Guam as a vehicle to explore the seeping Americanization endemic in her childhood education. Later, we will argue that neocolonialsim is rampant in Micronesia and that the main purveyors of American culture are the schools and teachers themselves. We will conclude with an argued plea for a new pedagogy for Micronesia that embraces local traditions as a means to empower the schools. The product will be a more effective education for island children.

Odette's Story

When I was a youngster, there was one thing I wanted more than anything else--I really wished for a bridged nose. My nose--bulbous as a baby tomato--gave me away as a Filipino native. I did not want to be Filipina; I wanted to be American. All the books that I had in school had pictures of light skinned children who, according to Philippine standards, mirrored

images of beauty. After school I watched "Sesame Street," "The Love Boat," and Filipino shows where the mestiza stars all had light skin and bridged noses.

This early exposure to images that did not reflect what I saw in the mirror created a desire in me to become American. Americans, I thought were the people to be. They were rich (they had dollars), they were smart (they spoke English), and they were beautiful (they had nose bridges, and often, flowing yellow hair). By the time I was in third grade I had an on-going battle with my parents because not only did I want a nose bridge, I *had* to change my name from Maria Odette (which was shamefully Filipino) to Mary Jane (fashionably American).

Now that I am an American citizen and have live in the mainland and Guam for a total of fifteen years, I look back at my childhood and wonder why I so wished to be that which I was not. I also wonder why being Filipino was so shameful to me and being American seemed like a step up in my life. I then traced this perspective to the way I was educated, both informally (through culture and media) and formally (in parochial schools).

My father, a lover of poetry and trivia, taught me "If" by Rudyard Kipling when I was very young. He cherished my ability to memorize this classic poem because it showed everyone that his daugther was now "English-speaking." He also taught my siblings and I American trivia. I listened to American music, ABBA and Debbie Boone, for they were the most popular performers in the Philippines for a time. I was in love with Leaf Garrett through his many newsstand magazine pictures.

In the Philippines I attended a very prestigious all-girls parochial school. The status of the school stemmed partly from its ability to mandate spoken English. Fines (twenty-five centavos) were issued to students if

someone of authority heard a word of Bisaya, the local dialect. Books and materials were all based on cultural perceptions totally foreign to Filipinos. My most favorite book in first grade (apart from the Dick and Jane basal reader) was The Little Red Balloon whose main character was a beautiful little Caucasian girl who lost her balloon. For years I read that book over and over wondering how I could become like that little girl. When I moved to Guam in fifth grade, my first friend in St. Anthony was Beth. I liked her instantly because Beth mirrored the image of the little red ballon girl I so longed to be.

The fragmentation of my world, caused by the primacy given to the American way, was also tacitly exacerbated by my teachers in the Philippines and, later, in Guam. Since I began formal schooling, all my classes and all my teachers divided the world into tiny fragments that were set apart from each other. I learned geography in social studies class. I learned about plate tectonics in science class and about verbs in language arts class. The connections between all these concepts were never presented and hence I grew up with the notion that the world was fragmented and that interconnections did not exist.

When one sees the world as fragments that are not interconnected, then everything becomes static--each surviving on its own and not being affected by others. From this point of view one may easily become intolerant. When one fails to recognize interrelationships with others, it is easy to assume that your own version of reality is the only relevant one--the only one you need accept. Operating from a limited fragment of reality, it is easy to assume that one's standards should apply to everyone else. In my case, I believed that the American reality (with its aquiline noses, yellow hair, and English language), as reflected in my school books and the TV shows, was more valid than the Filipino reality I lived. Hence I grew to resist my

heritage. I had a distaste for my culture and desired to be American in all things.

I am sure that many children and adults from less developed countries have this desire. If you will indulge me, I will share with you what I think are reasons why the American experience is given primacy by many people who see the world through their fragmented lenses.

Consequences of a Fragmented World View

From my perspective (which I derived from Wolf's book People without History,) the fragmentation of the world of humankind is related to the way we see the progression of human history. Academia and education have conveniently divided knowledge into pieces (political science, sociology, anthropology, psychology), regions (Egypt, Eurasia, Antarctica), and peoples (African Americans, Bosnians, Hispanics). The marked specialization of the many aspects of education has fomented the division of continents, nations, cultures, and ethnicity's as though they were mere terms--static, disconnected, bounded entities that are entirely unrelated and share no commonalties.

In order to make some sense of man's social history, a linear, teleological perspective, beginning history at one point and ending it in another, continues to thrive. This view treats history as a genealogy (Wolf, 1982) i.e., Greece gave birth to Rome, Rome begat Christian Europe. There, the Renaissance evolved, which gave birth to the Age of Enlightenment, which in turn spawned political democracy and the Industrial Revolution. Democracy and industry were mated to create the United States, the bastion of life, liberty, equality, and the pursuit of happiness (Wolf, 1982).

Notice the linear progression. Every aspect what we know as history is but a precursor to the creation of the United States and its Manifest Destiny. What significant role, then, do our Pacific ancestors play in the creation of

world history? The mainstream viewpoint has left Pacifica out of the loop of the social, political, and economic progression of humankind. If we islanders do count, our part is only secondary, as transitory beings in temporary societies--precursors to placement within the manifest destiny of the United States, the ultimate destiny of all.

The impact of Americanization on second and third world areas, particularly Micronesia, has not gone unnoticed. All of us have seen the ever increasing transformation of today's youth-with their pants 10 sizes bigger, and their affinity for rap music and spray paint- into that which has been coined as the MTV generation. Micronesians are concerned that this transformation has threatened the viability and vitality of our cultures. On Guam, Chamorro Language Program teachers race against the rapid disintegration of the indigenous language. Commonwealth of the Mariana Islands' Lieutenant Governor Manglona has challenged CNMI parents and teachers to preserve the traditional language and culture. At the Pacific Islands Bilingual Bicultural Association annual meeting, Manglona stated that:

> Action must be taken now. Just talking about it will not help. We need positive action. Barring a world catastrophe, technology will continue to advance and outside influences will continue to grow. If our languages and cultures are to survive, it behooves us to develop and implement workable strategies to stem this dangerous tide. Despite our meager financial resources, we can no longer afford to underfund our efforts to preserve our language and our heritage. Either it is important to us or it's not.

His message communicates the urgent sense of loss with the coming demise of traditionalism. It also reflects the perception that Micronesia will

ultimately lose its distinctive culture to the Western tide, if action is not taken now--a linear perspective that is endemic in the way we see everything.

Disavowing the Intellectual Victimization of Micronesia

We have argued that Micronesia is in the thralls of a sort of cultural fatalism wherein the demise of traditionalism is assumed from the linear mentality of western neocolonial thought. Odette's story suggests that much of this mentality is perpetuated by the western-style schooling we advance in the cause of modern education. Yet, we do not have to see everything in a linear fashion. The history of Micronesia dates back and continues to move onward not separately but connectedly with other parts of the world (the Philippines, Asia, Federated States of Micronesia, Republic of Palau, etc.), and not just America. Micronesia need not be a victim in American manifest destiny, but can foster and preserve a history and destiny of its own connectedness to a larger, less predestined, world.

If we take off our fragmented lenses and see Micronesia from the perspective of connectedness-that Guamanians get the Taiwan flu, Japanese migrate to France, spaghetti was first eaten in China--then we will realize that humankind evolved as a result of interactions between different peoples from different places. By keeping this in mind, then we'll also realize that not one or another's history is valid, but the history of all since it marks and contributes to the evolution of the world.

Our Role in Micronesian Neocolonialism

As educators, we must come to terms with the fact that the way we have been educated and continue to educate perpetuates the eradication of our culture and our native languages. We fail to recognize that we are the ones who enliven time and time again neocolonialism by the way we teach

via stateside curriculum, methodologies, and texts. The books that we use in our classrooms and the lessons that we choose to present validate the experiences of those who live in the United States and treats our local culture as secondary- a precursor to the US. (Think of the many students who have accepted the validity of MTV versus that of the traditional Chamorro ways).

We must give the experiences of our students primacy, yet, and most importantly, we must emphasize the interconnectedness of our part of the world with the world of others. We also must explode the myth that our indigenous ways of knowing are an impediment to economic and technological advancement. We must explore the merits and values of more traditional ways of teaching and learning, capitalizing upon them to develop a philosophy of education and pedagogy that is distinctly Micronesian.

From the point of view of interconnectedness, Micronesia can evolve on its own taking into account its interactions with other people, cultures, and government. Such an evolution would indeed breed a healthier respect for our local culture and those with which we interact.

Confounding Issues in Micronesian Pedagogy

Odette's story and her concerns illuminate a problem that confounds and frustrates educators throughout Micronesia. How can we preserve and carry forward the traditions, language, and shared meanings of our various island cultures when we operate under a distinctly American model of education? How can we convince our children that their cultural heritage is important when we use books, materials, methods, curricula, and language from elsewhere? How can we modernize and reform our educational systems, and make our children competitive in the world labor market, while

teaching students to foster and preserve the heritage that makes us unique and important as Micronesian societies?

Failure to understand and resolve this key issue has resulted in doubt, confusion, frustration, and resentment among Micronesian teachers. The results of this lack of resolution appear wherever Micronesian teachers teach. On Guam, a colleagues has told her students that our white mainland imported faculty are nothing more than intellectual and language imperialists. On Palau, a first grade teacher recently complained by saying, "We begin teaching in English already in the first grade. That is too early. They don't understand anything." Another Palauan teacher responded, "But if they don't begin to learn English early, they will never learn it. They will never get anywhere." On Rota, an elementary teacher commented on the lack of a relevant curriculum , "They don't want us to think. They don't want us to create. They want us to follow the curriculum. Period. Even if it has nothing to do with us here on Rota."

The issue seems to derive from a confusion between aims and means, goals and methods. As we modernize our schools, must we also westernize them? Is Americanism inevitable? Is it possible to modernize without relying on ways, means, and methods imported from elsewhere? What education do we want for our young, anyway? The confusion between education, culture, modernization, colonialism, autonomy and reform that exists in Micronesia is exacerbated by 8 confounding problems:

1. We have confused modernization with Americanization when it comes to curricular and methodological reform. Throughout Micronesia, the scurry to adopt mainland texts, materials, library resources, and teaching methods--and then to evaluate the performance of local schools and their

students by mainland standardized tests--suggests that the goal of much of our reform impetus is to replicate, as closely as we can afford, the United States' system of education.

2. *Reform, in many instances, has taken on an "us vs. them" mentality that is intellectually debilitating and counterproductive.* A colleague at the College of Education teaches that English-speaking professors are language imperialists who set high standards in grammar, syntax, and composition as means to control and subjugate the culturally different student. Another professor suggests to students that Micronesians will never become academically successful until their parents come to appreciate and support the standards of American schooling. One colleague asserted publicly during candidate interviews that students in the Chamorro Language Teaching Program were invariably academically deficient. Such comments suggest a fragmented, competitive, and ethnocentric mentality among educators.

3. *The impetus for reform has often been through governmental action or legislative fiat.* On Guam, the Guam Teacher Corps, Chamorro Language Program, the Vocational Education Program are all the direct product of legislation. The positive side of this legislative involvement is that these proposals are progressive and address immediate concerns. The downside is that legislatures seldom understand the teaching profession, but believe their support of public schooling gives license to dictate the methods of school management and instruction. In a memorable recent incident, Guam's director of education was publicly censored by legislators, on television, simply for suggesting a new name for the public school system.

4. *A lack of self-confidence among many of Micronesia's school systems has been combined with decided failure among administrators to trust the professionalism of teaching faculty.* One school administrator

commented to us, "We need to know that our children are learning in spite of the quality of our teachers. We need to know that our children are learning, because many of our teachers are not very good." These comments reflect a lack of recognition of the ever-increasing level of expertise among Micronesia's teaching force. The Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of Palau, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, all recently have pushed for a minimum bachelors degree for all teachers. Through the Guam Teacher Corps and local recruitment efforts, Guam hopes to soon eliminate non-qualified "emergency hire" teachers. UOG, PREL, and other institutions have invested considerable expertise and time in developing the skills of Micronesia's teachers.

5. We have found it increasingly easy to blame the multicultural character of our schools for our shortcomings and low standards.

Several educators, and even a few of my colleagues, have told me that low standardized test scores result from the bilingual skills of our students, even though educational research overwhelmingly demonstrates the opposite. One professor explained that low standardized test scores come directly from unfair test questions like one supposed first-grade question referring to snow. She fails to explain how school children from southern Texas and Florida score well on such questions. Nor can she explain how Guam children score abysmally on simple arithmetic problems where language is not a factor.

7. We have virtually no research base or ongoing research agenda. Micronesia, an area that spans almost 4 million miles of the earth's surface, has few ongoing research efforts in education. Nor are governments likely to initiate research in the immediate future. In fact, in many instances, researchers are met with governmental attitudes of profound distrust and

overt obfuscation of research efforts. In many instances, attempts at educational reform must proceed without and clear sense as to the status, conditions, or progress of local schools. It is difficult to introduce a concrete program of substantive change in Micronesian education. We just do not know enough about it. Very little research has been done--no one really knows what we are doing, what we have accomplished, what is still left to be done.

8. We are starting reform at the wrong end of the stick. We have initiated change for the sake of change and modernization for the sake of modernization without asking the important philosophical questions that lay the groundwork for educational reform.

Toward a Micronesian Pedagogy

We have argued that education in Micronesia is not well. Classes are conducted using foreign knowledge, foreign teaching methods, and foreign texts. Our children are evaluated according to foreign norms that compare them to foreign children. The result is a product decidedly foreign to our teachers and school children alike. It is time for a change.

Micronesian education is entering a new era. The developmental work of improving schools, finding and training teachers, writing curricula and buying texts are ongoing tasks, but we are now capable of becoming self-directive in these areas. Our schools are built; our teachers know what they are doing. It is time to take charge of our educational processes and redirect our efforts toward an educational product that is fundamentally Micronesian. To reach this goal, certain actions must be taken.

1. Give teachers decision making authority.

Competent teachers are reflective practitioners. They combine knowledge of the subject, a sophisticated understanding of teaching methods,

and continual professional judgments by teachers. Put simply, quality education depends on finding good teachers, training them well, and then relying on their professionalism to make teaching work. As Micronesia's teachers become increasingly sophisticated, tight control of pedagogy through strict curriculum guidelines, frequent classroom evaluations, and authoritarian administration becomes increasingly inappropriate. Research suggests that effective teachers set goals, reflect on their practice, and make independent decisions based on student, content, and circumstance. As Micronesia upgrades the training of its teachers, we must increasingly trust their professionalism and good judgment, relying on new- found expertise to get the job done. If we do not allow teachers to use the skills we have taught them, we have wasted the training we have all invested so much in.

Reflective teaching cannot be cut out of the equation if we want education to work. Ordering teachers to follow cookbook curricula or to adhere to basil reader checklists kills the very forces that make education work. A "teacher proof" curriculum guide is a paradox because *teacher proof* also means *teacher helpless*, and it is the teacher who makes the curriculum come alive. The whole point of training teachers is to give them the power to make effective educational decisions, not to take that power away from them.

When teachers are empowered to make educational decisions, they can use their professional competence to productive ends. Teachers can utilize textbooks and curricula in ways that meet local needs. Teachers can become cultural brokers who make sure that what is taught inside the classroom has to do with what goes on outside of the classroom. Teachers can reaffirm cultural beliefs and promote cultural values. Teachers can eliminate the cultural messages inherent in mainland educational material and methods,

and include instead messages abut the value and merit of Micronesian culture.

2. ***Develop local materials***

We need to develop a resource base that is tied to the Micronesian experience. Mainland-produced texts and materials are prohibitively expensive for local schools--many textbook series cost several hundred thousand dollars to adopt. Shipping becomes a problem and often books fail to arrive when needed. The main problem with mainland texts and materials, however, is that they are not made for us and they do not reflect who we are. They teach our children other ways of thinking instead of a respect for our values and traditions. Surely we can do better at home.

We have the knowledge and resources to produce our own texts and supplementary materials. And we can produce these Micronesian materials more cheaply than we can acquire them abroad. School systems should consider the promotion and adoption of locally-produces materials as an important step towards cultural preservation. At the very least, we should consider adopting locally-produced materials as a cost-cutting venture.

3. ***Establish a robust research agenda.***

We were recently asked by the principal of Guam's Carbullido Elementary school to evaluate a federally funded multi age classroom project. The curriculum coordinator frankly declared to us, "We are not very excited about your being here. No one really wants to be evaluated." Later, one classroom teacher boldly exclaimed, "I don't like you. I do not like you here. We know what we are doing." Comments like these spotlight a local hesitancy towards finding out what and how we are doing.

There is no research base in Micronesian education--no collected knowledge to build upon as we change and improve. We do not encourage

the collection of educational research, either. On Guam, research efforts are often met by suspicion, hostility, and miles of red tape. In our graduate research courses, most teachers focus their research efforts outside of the schools rather than face the daunting bureaucracy of the Guam Department of Education. The University of Guam's research journal, the *Micronesian Educator*, had to postpone last year's edition because so little research was submitted. From our understanding, educational researchers on Palau must actually pay a research tax before beginning research efforts.

We will never accomplish our goals without a solid base of research from which to draw upon. We will never improve our schools unless we truly understand how they work and what their problems are. Local schools need to encourage the evaluation of existing programs, and then frankly and honestly share the results. The University of Guam must encourage the research effort by ceding research time to faculty. School systems must facilitate access and share information. We must all realize that we are ignorant of our own processes and products, and cooperate to learn more. Knowledge cannot be perceived as a threat--we must jointly use it as a resource.

4. Reflect and Decide--become education;s leaders.

We must become our own advocates and enter the public arena to voice our concerns about the schools in which we work. We must decide that change is in order, then let our professional views be known. So far, we have been idly waiting for change to present itself at our school house doors, never realizing that innovation from outside of our schools is counterproductive to our needs. Mainland educational innovations suit mainland problems and mainland needs, not ours. When local politicians meddle in our school programs, classrooms become a platform for political change, not educational

change. Micronesian educators need to realize that the most vital changes will be the ones that we ourselves will make. No one knows more about our children and our needs than we do. We are the professionals.

Conclusion

When grant writing for UOG's upcoming doctoral program, we noted that we are probably America's most culturally diverse university. Reviewing our grant applications, we were struck by the mediocrity of our educational efforts in the area of educating for diversity. Mainland universities should look to us for intellectual leadership in the area of culture. Instead, we expend our efforts learning how *they* deal with issues of diversity, all the while whining about how we are victims of their intellectual oppression. Our programs represent conformity instead of creativity, traditionalism instead of innovation, cultural ignorance instead of cultural expertise.

We are not the victims of education in Micronesia, we are its purveyors. We write the curricula, we plan the programs, we teach the classes. We are, or should be, the reflective practitioners popularized in educational journals. As Micronesian educators and intellectual leaders, we need to tackle the question of what our educational programs are all about. What philosophy underlies our school programs? What kind of citizens are we trying to produce? How should our various cultures, languages, ideologies, and backgrounds manifest themselves in how we educate our children? How can our schools reflect the cultural values that guide our lives? How we answer these questions will illuminate the path we take as educators. We need to explore the merits and values of more traditional ways of teaching and learning, capitalizing upon them to develop a philosophy of education and pedagogy that is distinctly Micronesian.

A philosophy of education provides focus and coordination. It allows educators to work in tandem toward common goals. Educational thinker John Dewey observed that the great philosophers have always taken a keen interest in education because there is an intimate relation between the two. If philosophy provides wisdom--a vision of the better life to be led--then education is the praxis of the philosopher. Philosophy provides a framework for education; consciously directed education realizes philosophic goals. Philosophy guides pedagogy away from disorganized speculation by coordinating efforts toward concrete ends. Philosophy steers the course of education by establishing the goals of pedagogy.

Education is a business of change. As Micronesia changes, we are responsible for preparing our young to cope and prosper in a new world. Yet, we are not helpless in the face of modernization; we need not abandon our children simply because progress is inevitable. John Dewey believed that as times change, schools must adapt by offering programs of study that allow students to make sense of change and incorporate it into their lives. Schools serve as *mediators* between the new and the old, the traditional and the modern.

An important first step in becoming mediators is establishing a philosophy of education that is truly Micronesian. We must come to realize that we can never successfully become an extension of the mainland model of education--nor do we want to be. We must forge a system of instruction that suits *us* and teaches our children who *we* are. We need to ask ourselves, "What kind of citizen should our schools build?" and we need to answer that question culturally as well as economically.

As a second step, we need to realize who the true cultural emissaries are--classroom teachers. Political speeches will not preserve our cultures.

Neither will new curricula or locally produced materials. Nor will culture be saved by legislative fiat. Language classes alone will not cure our cultural ills, as Guam's Chamorro teachers are coming to realize. Instead, we need to give educators a mandate to teach the value and importance of traditionalism. We must give classroom teachers the authority and support they need to break free of mainland standards of instruction. We must trust their competence. Schools and teachers form the first line of defense against cultural erosion and our best hope in preserving the cultural resources of Micronesia.

Reference

Wolf, E. R. (1982). Europe and the people without history. Berkeley: U. C. Press.